



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

Revised October 4, 2000

H.R. 3671 **Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs** **Improvement Act of 2000**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
on September 28, 2000*

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 3671 would have no net impact on the federal budget. Because the act could affect the timing of outlays from direct spending authority, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. We estimate, however, that the net impact on federal spending would not be significant in any year. H.R. 3671 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

H.R. 3671 would amend the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act and the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act to reduce the amounts that may be spent for administering grants for fish and wildlife restoration. Specifically, for each of the two grant programs carried out under these acts, the legislation would limit spending for administrative expenses to \$9.5 million in 2001, and to that amount, adjusted for inflation, for each year thereafter.

Under existing law, the amounts set aside for such expenses are calculated as a percentage of total deposits to the two funds each year. The annual deposits consist of excise taxes (primarily on fishing and hunting equipment), import duties, and interest earnings. All such amounts, including those used for administration, are available without appropriation in the year following deposit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which oversees both programs, allocates 8 percent annually to administer the federal aid-wildlife program (\$17 million in 2000) and 6 percent to administer the sport fish program (\$16 million in 2000). By capping administrative costs, the legislation would reduce such costs in the future, however, this savings would be offset by an equal amount of additional grant expenditures.

H.R. 3671 also would create a new program for hunting education and safety, to be funded with up to \$7.5 million of each year's revenues. In addition, it would set aside up to \$3.5 million from each of the two funds for multi-state conservation grants. These new authorized expenditures would not increase the total amount of spending for fish and wildlife restoration but rather would offset funding for other existing grants.

On October 3, 2000, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 3671 as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on September 28, 2000. That estimate incorrectly stated that the act contains a private-sector mandate, as defined in UMRA. This revised estimate corrects that mistake.

On March 23, 2000, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 3671 as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on March 15, 2000. The two versions of the legislation are similar, and the estimated effects on the federal budget are the same. The House version of H.R. 3641 would, however, impose a private-sector mandate on the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The cost of that mandate would not be significant. The Senate version does not contain any mandates.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.